

Getting Recognized for Your Accomplishments

2 March 2026

Panelists:

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1) Why go through the process of award nomination?

- Honor for you & for institution
 - Awards affect institutional rankings
 - Your reputation affects institution & vice versa
 - Good for the prestige of the department, field, institution
- Important for promotion, e.g. NSF career, Pew/Sloan/Packard
- Financial resources for research group
- Smaller awards beget bigger awards
- Part of your career progression
- It feels good!
- Because you deserve it!
- Some awards are very undersubscribed
- Need to be in the game to win it

2) Can you describe the types of awards one might consider -- a taxonomy of awards

- Early career, discipline-specific (subfield) & local Cornell awards
- Prestige awards from professional societies, in your field (must be a Fellow first)
- High Prestige awards:
 - E.g. National academies, American Academy of Arts & Sciences, American Philosophical Society
- Must get early awards to get later awards

3) Strategies for getting prestigious awards

- If you don't apply to awards, you don't get them.
- Engage with award agencies and professional societies
- Join associations, get involved
- For Association awards – become an *active* member to be recognized
 - involves more than membership dues; engage, be active, contribute
 - volunteer activity, board member, president
- Renominate if unsuccessful the first time; some awards are won only after multiple nominations
- External nominations are generally preferable
- What is being looked for differs by award. Study the Call and understand exactly what is needed.
 - E.g. Pew/Sloan/Packard/early career: trajectory, ideas
 - Later career: track record, publications, sometimes service

4) How do I approach nominators and what should I provide them to make it easy for them to nominate me?

- Know what is needed for the award nomination, generally well-specified, read the requirements

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- Send full CV with initial request, but don't assume letter writer can decipher.
- Take care of as much of the materials as you can
- Ask the nominator for their preference: letter draft, bullet points, CV, other
- Be careful with crafting a letter; letters cannot be cookie cutter/identical
- Nominator:
 - someone who you know well
 - someone who received said honor previously
 - colleague in your field
 - your department chair, sometimes required to be the nominator
 - nominator ought to be well-known within the organization giving the award
 - higher the prestige, "further away" nominator sits from your department or personal trajectory
- Return the favor:
 - Important to reach back & do what others did for you
 - Can be your trainees as well
- Nominators are often asked to craft multiple letters for the same person, or to renominate: the first letter takes the most work; edits/updates thereafter

5) What are your thoughts about self-nominations vs. external nominations

- Award will specify if self-nomination is allowed
- External is usually better, less conflict of interest
- In some fields, external nominations land better than self-nominations

6) What are the institutional resources for awards?

- Departmental awards committees
- Examples from other recipients – ask colleagues
- Serve on society and other awards committee
- Awards lists:
 - <https://facultydevelopment.cornell.edu/grants-awards/university-college-external-awards/>
 - <https://researchservices.cornell.edu/faculty-awards>
 - <https://www.science.org/content/article/if-you-re-hesitant-apply-professional-awards-remember-it-s-worth-putting-yourself>